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THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF HUMAN SERVICES

OFFICE FOR CHILDREN

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ADDENDUM

TO

ANALYSIS OF FY'86 HELP FOR CHILDREN CASES

WHERE CHILDREN NEEDED

MENTAL HEALTH OR MENTAL RETARDATION SERVICES

UNRESOLVED CASES AND UNSERVED CHILDREN

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ADDENDUM
TO
ANALYSIS OF FY'86 HELP FOR CHILDREN CASES
WHERE CHILDREN NEEDED
MENTAL HEALTH OR MENTAL RETARDATION SERVICES

UNRESOLVED CASES AND UNSERVED CHILDREN

A significant number of Help for Children cases involving children who were or could be the responsibility of the new Departments of Mental Retardation and Mental Health were not successfully resolved during FY'86. This is a further indication of the difficulty children who are diagnosed as having mental retardation, autism, developmental disabilities or who are emotionally disturbed have in obtaining services. The purpose of this addendum is to document the status of these cases. The impairments that are highlighted are the same as in the original document.

OPEN CASES

Impairment	Total Cases	Number Open	Percent Open
Mental Retardation	593	205	35%
Developmental Disability	232	85	36%
Autism	79	32	41%
Emotional Disturbance	2200	614	28%

A more detailed breakout of the case date, the length of time unresolved, type of services requested, barriers to service and agency responsible for providing services follows.

I. MENTAL RETARDATION

In FY'86, 593 (9.3%) of the Help for Children cases involved children diagnosed as mentally retarded (MR). Over 1/3 of these cases were still unresolved at the end of FY'86.

A. LENGTH OF TIME OPEN

The length of time cases are open indicates the problems encountered in accessing services for mentally retarded children. Lengthy mediation or appeals processes, insufficient

funds or lack of program slots can create long delays. Of the 205 cases still open at the end of FY'86, approximately 1/5th had been open for a year or longer.

Length of Time Open	Number
Over 3 years	1
2 to 3 years	3
1 to 2 years	36
6 months to 1 year	54
3 to 6 months	53
0 to 3 months	57
not recorded	1

B. SERVICE REQUEST DESCRIPTION

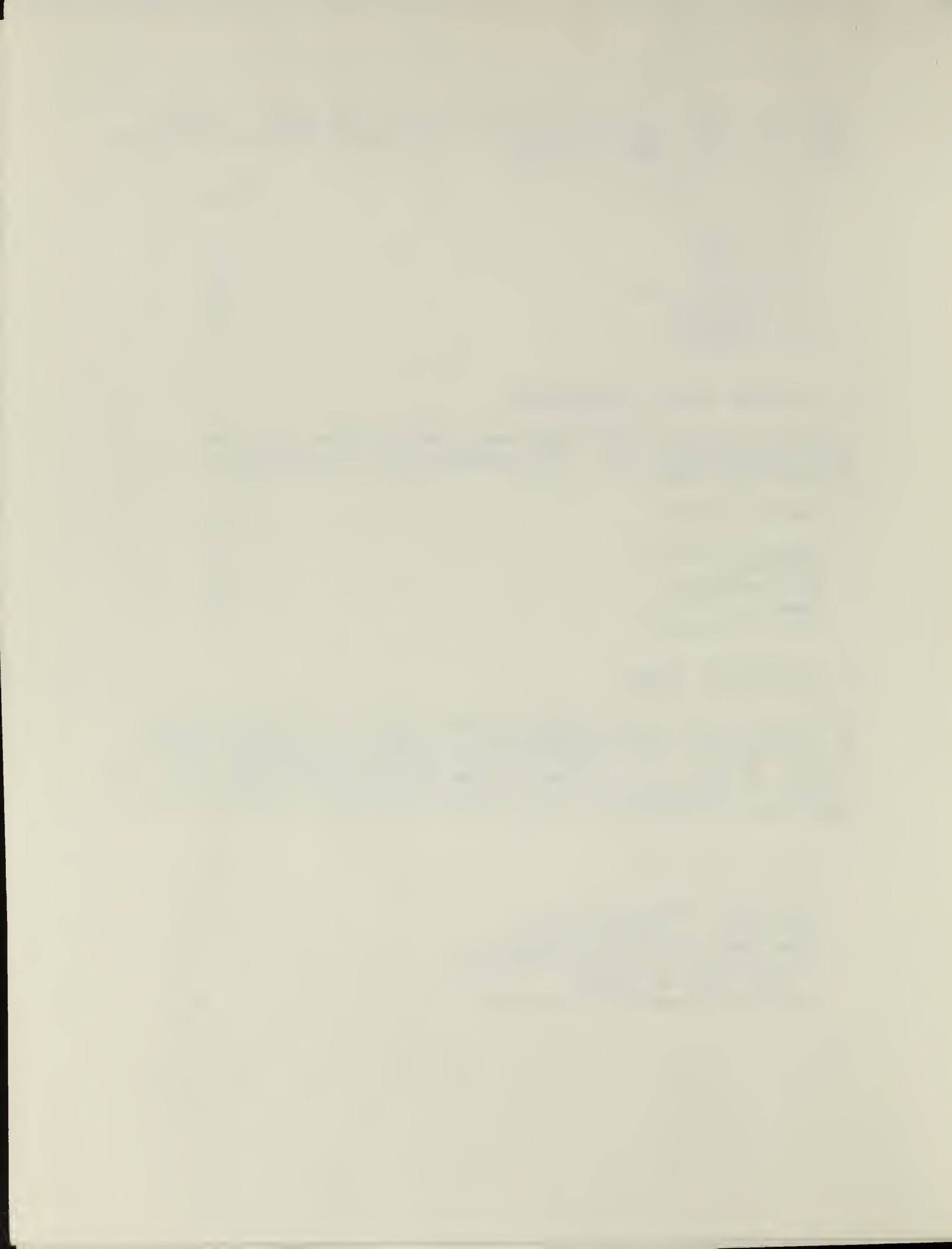
Services requested for open cases parallel those for cases resolved during FY '86. The largest number of requests for the MR population were:

Service Request	Number
Special Education	92
Placement	59
Case Management	25
Camp	10
Legal Assistance	6

C. RESPONSIBLE AGENCY

Not all services for MR children fall clearly within the mandate of Chapter 766 (LEA responsibility) or that of a specific human service agency. The lack of clarity regarding responsibility for certain educational, residential and support services for MR children is reflected in the listing of agencies responsible for these unresolved cases.

Agency Responsible	Number
Local Education Authority	75
Department of Mental Health	56
Department of Social Services	30
Other public and private agencies (DPH, MCB, DYS, MRC)	27
Responsible agency not recorded	17



D. BARRIERS TO SERVICE

Barriers to service for mentally retarded children fall into a number of categories from lack of sufficient funds within an identified agency to disagreements between agencies as to which is responsible for services. The barriers most frequently recorded were:

Barrier To Service	Number
Disagreement between agency and client on eligibility for service or level of service	63
Lack of sufficient programs or program slots (existing programs filled)	34
Responsible agency lacks sufficient funds	25
Interagency conflict regarding responsibility for services to retarded children	18
No agency able to be identified as responsible for this service	6

II. DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY

In FY'86, 232 Help for Children cases involved children diagnosed with a developmental disability. Over 1/3 of these cases were still unresolved at the end of FY'86.

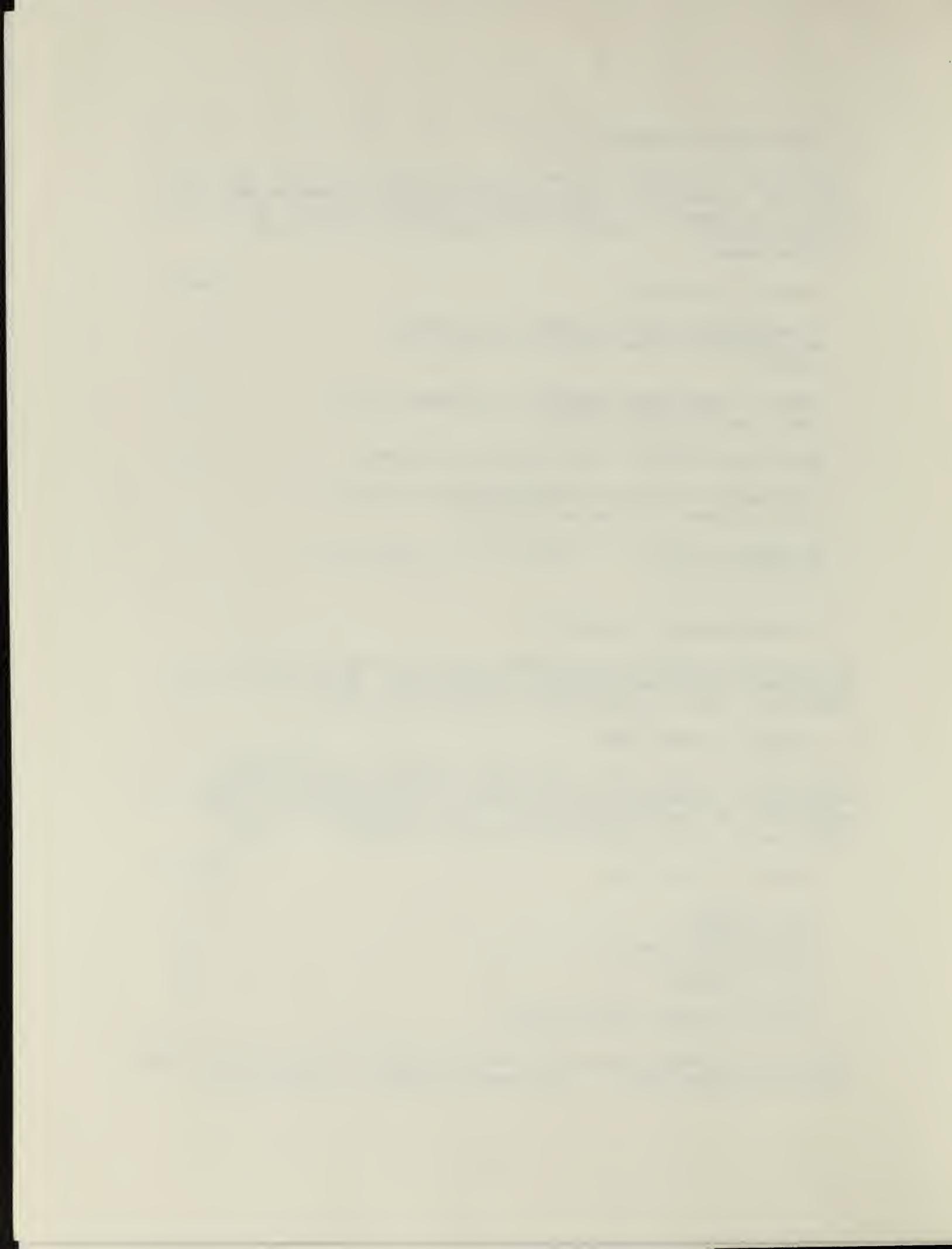
A. LENGTH OF TIME OPEN

The length of time cases are open indicates the problems encountered in accessing services for developmentally disabled children. Of the 85 cases still open at the end of FY'86, approximately 1/5th had been open for 6 months or longer.

Length of Time Open	Number
2 to 3 years	1
1 to 2 years	8
6 months to 1 year	7
3 to 6 months	34
0 to 3 months	35

B. SERVICE REQUEST DESCRIPTION

Services requested for open cases are similar to those for cases resolved during FY'86. The largest number of requests for



developmentally disabled children were:

Service Request	Number
Special Education	55
Placement	7
Legal Assistance	7
Case Management	4
Medical Services	3
Mental Health Services	3

C. RESPONSIBLE AGENCY

As reflected by the number of special education requests, local school systems were most often responsible for services in these unresolved cases.

Agency Responsible	Number
Local Education Authority	56
Department of Social Services	7
Department of Mental Health	7
Other public and private agencies (DPH, MCB, MRC)	5
Responsible agency not recorded	1

D. BARRIERS TO SERVICE

Barriers to service for developmentally disabled children fall into a number of categories from lack of sufficient program slots to disagreements between agencies as to which is responsible for services. The barriers most frequently recorded were:

Barrier to Service	Number
Disagreement between agency and client on eligibililty for service or level of service	50
Lack of sufficient programs or program slots (existing programs filled)	16
Interagency conflict regarding responsiblity for services to developmentally disabled children	3
Responsible agency lacks sufficient funds	2

III. AUTISM

In FY'86, 79 Help for Children cases involved autistic children. Over 40% of these cases were still unresolved at the end of FY'86.

A. LENGTH OF TIME OPEN

The length of time cases are open indicates the problems encountered in accessing services for autistic children. Of the 32 cases still open at the end of FY'86, over 1/3 had been open for 6 months or longer.

Length of Time Open	Number
2 to 3 years	1
1 to 2 years	2
6 to 1 year	8
3 to 6 months	7
0 to 3 months	14

B. SERVICE REQUEST DESCRIPTION

Services requested for open cases parallel those for cases resolved during FY'86. The largest number of requests for autistic children were:

Service Request	Number
Special Education	20
Placement	5
Medical Care	2
Financial Assistance (SSI, Medicaid)	2

C. RESPONSIBLE AGENCY

The LEA was most often responsible for services to autistic children.

Agency Responsible	Number
Local Education Authority	17
Responsible agency not recorded	6
Department of Social Services	4
Department of Mental Health	3
Other public agencies	2

D. BARRIERS TO SERVICE

Barriers to service for autistic children most frequently recorded were:

Barrier to Service	Number
Disagreement between agency and client on eligibility for service or level of service	13
Interagency conflict regarding responsibility for services to autistic children	4
Responsible agency lacks sufficient funds	3
Lack of sufficient programs or program slots (existing programs filled)	2

IV. EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE

In FY'86, 2200 (45% of the children's caseload) Help for Children cases involved children diagnosed as emotionally disturbed. Over 1/4 of these cases were still unresolved at the end of FY'86.

A. LENGTH OF TIME OPEN

The length of time these cases are open indicates the problems encountered by emotionally disturbed children. Lengthy mediation or appeals processes and lack of program slots can create long delays. Of the 614 cases still open at the end of FY'86, over 1/3 had been open 6 months or longer.

Length of time open	Number
2 to 3 years	7
1 to 2 years	56
6 months to 1 year	146
3 to 6 months	285
0 to 3 months	119
not recorded	1

B. SERVICE REQUEST DESCRIPTION

The largest number of unresolved requests for emotionally disturbed children were:

Service Request	Number
Special Education	321
Placement	136
Case Management	71
Mental Health Services (counseling, diagnostic evaluation)	31
Camp	18
Legal Assistance	13

C. RESPONSIBLE AGENCY

Not all services for emotionally disturbed children fall clearly within the mandate of Chapter 766 (LEA responsibility) or that of a human service agency. The lack of clarity regarding responsibility for certain educational, residential and support services for emotionally disturbed children is reflected in the listing of agencies for these unresolved cases.

Agency Responsible	Number
Local Education Authority	318
Department of Social Services	133
Department of Mental Health	77
Agency responsible not recorded	48
Other public and private agencies (DPH, MCB, MRC)	
Department of Youth Services	14

D. BARRIERS TO SERVICE

Barriers to service for emotionally disturbed children fall into a number of categories from lack of sufficient program slots to disagreements between agencies as to which is responsible for services. The highest percentage of interagency disputes occurred in serving the emotionally disturbed children, as compared to the other three categories of cases. The barriers most frequently recorded were:

Barrier to Service	Number
Disagreement between agency and client on eligibility for service or level of service	295

Interagency conflict regarding responsibility for services to emotionally disturbed children	84
Lack of sufficient programs or program slots (existing programs filled)	58
No agency able to be identified as responsible for this service	20
Responsible agency lacks sufficient funds	14

V. CONCLUSION

Insufficient funds within agencies and lack of available program slots create very long delays for children who are or could be the responsibility of the new Departments of Mental Health and Mental Retardation. Mentally retarded children, especially those with emotional or behavioral problems may wait years for appropriate services.

These Help for Children cases underscore the need for agencies currently serving mentally retarded, developmentally delayed, autistic and emotionally disturbed children to continue to serve these children during the transition period arising from the creation of the new Mental Health and Mental Retardation agencies. The need for new programs, program models and increased funding is also indicated.

Not all children who need services find their way to OFC's Help for Children Program. It cannot be assumed, therefore, that the numbers in this report reflect the true numbers of children who need services from the Departments of Mental Health and Mental Retardation. The numbers in this report serve as starting points, however, for planning especially for the new Department of Mental Retardation, and point to the need for continued and in some cases increased involvement by other agencies in serving children with these disabilities.

Date		Description		Amount	
1901	Jan 1	Balance		100.00	
	Feb 1	Interest		5.00	
	Mar 1	Interest		5.00	
	Apr 1	Interest		5.00	
	May 1	Interest		5.00	
	Jun 1	Interest		5.00	
	Jul 1	Interest		5.00	
	Aug 1	Interest		5.00	
	Sep 1	Interest		5.00	
	Oct 1	Interest		5.00	
	Nov 1	Interest		5.00	
	Dec 1	Interest		5.00	
1902	Jan 1	Balance		100.00	
	Feb 1	Interest		5.00	
	Mar 1	Interest		5.00	
	Apr 1	Interest		5.00	
	May 1	Interest		5.00	
	Jun 1	Interest		5.00	
	Jul 1	Interest		5.00	
	Aug 1	Interest		5.00	
	Sep 1	Interest		5.00	
	Oct 1	Interest		5.00	
	Nov 1	Interest		5.00	
	Dec 1	Interest		5.00	
1903	Jan 1	Balance		100.00	
	Feb 1	Interest		5.00	
	Mar 1	Interest		5.00	
	Apr 1	Interest		5.00	
	May 1	Interest		5.00	
	Jun 1	Interest		5.00	
	Jul 1	Interest		5.00	
	Aug 1	Interest		5.00	
	Sep 1	Interest		5.00	
	Oct 1	Interest		5.00	
	Nov 1	Interest		5.00	
	Dec 1	Interest		5.00	